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August 21, 2002

Marlene H. Dortch
Secretary
Office of the Secretary
Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, SW, CY-B402
Washington, DC 20554

RECEIVED
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FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION
OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY

Re: WC Docket No. 02-214
Application by the Verizon Corporation for Authorization Under Section 271 of the
Communications Act to Provide In-Region, Interlata Services in the State of Virginia

Dear Ms. Dortch:

On behalf of the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO), I am pleased to submit these comments in support of Verizon's application requesting Federal Communications Commission (FCC) authorization to provide long-distance services in the state of Virginia.

NADO, a national public interest group founded in 1967, serves as the leading advocate for a regional approach to economic and community development in America's rural communities and small cities. Reasonably priced, high-quality telecommunications services are essential for the sustainable growth of rural America. Rural communities rely on services such as toll and long-distance calls to communicate with family, essential services and businesses in larger metropolitan areas.

In fact, approximately 25 percent of Americans live in rural areas. The FCC's approval of Verizon's 271 application in the state of Virginia would help to stimulate investment in broadband deployment that would allow families in rural communities to receive the same technological opportunities as their urban counterparts. Consumer choice among providers and lower-cost participation on the Internet over basic phone lines is important to the future of rural America. In Virginia, particularly, rural consumers frequently must use long distance to access the Internet, incurring both Internet Service Provider (ISP) and long distance charges. The approval of Verizon's application would give rural communities affordable access to the Internet and other advanced technologies that can potentially expand prospects for life-long learning, advance the quality of health care and enhance public safety.

NADO believes more competition in Virginia's long distance market will encourage the deployment of advanced telecommunications capabilities that can enhance economic and community development in its rural areas. Verizon can offer another choice and bring rates down while improving the quality of service. NADO urges the FCC to grant its approval to Verizon's application.

Sincerely yours,



Aliceann Wohlbruck
Executive Director

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